

Appln. No. 09/696,095
Amdt. dated April 8, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 12, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 48-56 and add new claims 57-62 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 48-56(Cancelled).

Claim 57 (New). A printing information distribution apparatus which is adapted to be connected to information terminals and printers located in different places, through a network, the apparatus comprising:

5 user information storage means for storing user information regarding an information terminal which accesses the printing information distributing apparatus;

printing reservation information storage means for storing printing reservation information;

10 information terminal authenticating means for acquiring, when the information terminal accesses the printing information distributing apparatus through the network, identification information indicating a user of the one of the information

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terminals, and performs authentication to determine whether or
15 not the user of the information terminal is stored in the user
information storage means;

printing reservation means for (i) transmitting a printing
reservation screen image for use in reservation for printing
desired printing information to the information terminal, when
20 the information terminal authenticating means authenticates the
information terminal, (ii) receiving a reservation for printing
the desired printing information from the information terminal,
and (iii) storing printing reservation information indicating the
desired printing information and the identification information
25 indicating the user of the one of the information terminals,
which is acquired by the information terminal authenticating
means, in the printing reservation information storage means, in
association with the printing reservation information and the
identification information;

30 printer authenticating means for authenticating one of the
printers, when said one of the printers accesses the printing
information distributing apparatus through the network;

identification information fetching means for fetching
identification information which is transmitted by said one of
35 the printers through the network when the printer authenticating

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means authenticates said one of the printers and the
identification information is input;

printing information generating means for (i) retrieving
from the printing reservation information storage means based on
40 the identification information fetched by the identification
information fetching means, (ii) reading printing reservation
information associated with the identification information from
the printing reservation information storage means, and (iii)
generating printing information based on the read printing
45 reservation information; and

printing information transmitting means for transmitting,
through the network, the printing information generated by the
printing information generating means to said one of the printers
which transmits the identification information, and causing said
50 one of the printers to print out the printing information.

Claim 58 (New). The printing information distributing
apparatus according to claim 57, wherein the printing information
transmitting means transmits charge information indicating a
printing charge for the printing information to said one of the
5 printers, and transmits the printing information to said one of

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the printers when the printing charge is paid for said one of the printers.

Claim 59 (New). The printing information distributing apparatus according to claim 58, wherein each of the printers includes money entry means for receiving each of predetermined kinds of money, and said one of the printers prints out the
5 printing information transmitted by the printing information transmitting means, when money is entered into the money entry means to pay for the charge indicated by the charge information.

Claim 60 (New). A printing information distribution apparatus which is adapted to be connected to information terminals and printers located in different places, through a network, the apparatus comprising:

- 5 a user information storage device which stores user information regarding an information terminal which accesses the printing information distributing apparatus;
- a printing reservation information storage device which stores printing reservation information;
- 10 an information terminal authenticating device which acquires, when the information terminal accesses the printing

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information distributing apparatus though the network,
identification information indicating a user of the one of the
information terminals, and performs authentication to determine
15 whether or not the user of the information terminal is stored in
the user information storage device;

a printing reservation device which (i) transmits a
printing reservation screen image for use in reservation for
printing desired printing information to the information
20 terminal, when the information terminal authenticating device
authenticates the information terminal, (ii) receives a
reservation for printing the desired printing information from
the information terminal, and (iii) stores printing reservation
information indicating the desired printing information and the
25 identification information indicating the user of the one of the
information terminals, which is acquired by the information
terminal authenticating device, in the printing reservation
information storage device, in association with the printing
reservation information and the identification information;

30 a printer authenticating device which authenticates one of
the printers, when said one of the printers accesses the printing
information distributing apparatus through the network;

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an identification information fetching device which fetches
identification information which is transmitted by said one of
35 the printers through the network when the printer authenticating
device authenticates said one of the printers and the
identification information is input;

a printing information generating device which (i)
retrieves from the printing reservation information storage
40 device based on the identification information fetched by the
identification information fetching device, (ii) reads printing
reservation information associated with the identification
information from the printing reservation information storage
device, and (iii) generates printing information based on the
45 read printing reservation information; and

a printing information transmitting device which transmits,
through the network, the printing information generated by the
printing information generating device to said one of the
printers which transmits the identification information, and
50 causes said one of the printers to print out the printing
information.

Claim 61 (New). The printing information distributing
apparatus according to claim 57, wherein the printing information

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transmitting device transmits charge information indicating a
printing charge for the printing information to said one of the
5 printers, and transmits the printing information to said one of
the printers when the printing charge is paid for said one of the
printers.

Claim 62 (New). The printing information distributing
apparatus according to claim 58, wherein each of the printers
includes a money entry device which receives each of
predetermined kinds of money, and said one of the printers prints
5 out the printing information transmitted by the printing
information transmitting device, when money is entered into the
money entry device to pay for the charge indicated by the charge
information.